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NSC BRIEFING

3 February 1960

FRANCE-ALGERIA

I. De Gaulle's firm stand on self-determination may improve long-term prospects for cease-fire talks with FLN.

A. But rebels will continue to demand guarantees beyond De

Gaulle's personal assurances.

*May feel, if Moslem confidence in him has grown significantly, that they had better treat with him now*

II. At home, De Gaulle faces some rough going if he presses action against prominent figures involved in long-planned plot against regime.

A. "Respectable" civilian leaders implicated apparently include Georges Bidault and Independent leader Duchet.

B. Generals apparently implicated include Zeller, former chief of staff; Allard, commander in Germany; and Salan.

C. High officer, purportedly reflecting despair of army brass over De Gaulle's firmness on self-determination, said next outburst would come from junior grades.

D. Paratroop captain says "bitter hatred" of De Gaulle among paratroops and officer corps will have lasting effect on army and could be source of later "serious trouble."

III. Indications that rightists plan to exploit Khrushchev visit in March on theme De Gaulle selling out completely to Communists.

*This seems to me a very harsh judgement of de Gaulle's difficulties in cleaning up the mess — On the internal level he has virtually a free hand. As far as the army is concerned, don't sell the old boy short; he knows the ropes better than any of the bulky boy colonels; he plans to use the nuclear shot as a useful asset to his advantage; and he has some strong champions.*